

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MBFR V 00452 270856Z

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ACTION ACDA-10

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AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0452

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: NEGOTIATIONS: INTERIM PRESS GUIDANCE ON

NOVEMBER 26 EASTERN PROPOSAL FOR MANPOWER FREEZE

BEGIN SUMMARY: AT ITS NOVEMBER 26 MEETING, THE AD HOC GROUP APPROVED THE FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE, REGARDING THE EASTERN PROPOSAL FOR A MANPOWER FREEZE, WHICH WAS MADE AT THE NOVEMBER 26 INFORMAL MEETING (SEPTTEL). THE GUIDANCE WAS APPROVED ON AN INTERIM BASIS, FOR USE IN THE EVENT OF PRESS INQUIRIES RESULTING FROM EASTERN PRESS LEAKS BEFORE THE NOV 29 AD HOC GROUP MEETING. IT WAS AGREED THAT ALLIED SPOKESMEN WOULD NOT TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO DESCRIBE OR TO COMMENT ON THE WARSAW

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MBFR V 00452 270856Z

PACT FREEZE PROPOSAL AND THAT THE SUGGESTED RESPONSE WOULD BE USED ONLY IN THE EVENT OF LEAKS. END

SUMMARY.

BEGIN TEXT:

EASTERN PROPOSAL -- TALKING POINTS

PRESS LEAKS

IT WOULD SEEM CLEAR THAT ONE OF EASTERN OBJECTIVES IN PUTTING FORWARD THE FORCE FREEZE PROPOSAL WAS TO APPEAL TO WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION WITH THE SUPERFICIAL PLAUSIBILITY OF THIS IDEA. THEREFORE, THE ALLIES HAVE TO BE PREPARED FOR PRESS LEAKS FAIRLY SOON.

POSSIBLE PRESS QUESTION:

IS IT TRUE THAT THE EAST HAS PROPOSED A FREEZE ON ALL THE FORCES IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS? IF SO, WHAT IS THE WESTERN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THIS PROPOSAL?

SUGGESTED WESTERN REPLY:

1. YES. EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAVE SUGGESTED A FREEZE ON ALL MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE AREA EXCEPT THE NAVY WHICH AS YOU KNOW HAS BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS BY AGREEMENT.
2. WE HAVE SERIOUS OBJECTIONS TO THIS EASTERN PROPOSAL WHICH DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO MEETING THE GOAL OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS. THE AGREEMENT WOULD MEAN ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRESENT UNSATISFACTORY EAST-WEST FORCE RELATIONSHIP IN AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT.
3. AS YOU KNOW, THE EAST HAS ABOUT 150,000 MORE GROUND FORCE MANPOWER IN THE AREA THAN THE WEST DOES.
4. TO ENTER ON THE MANPOWER FREEZE SUGGESTED BY THE EAST WOULD MEAN THAT THE WEST WAS ACCEPTING THIS EASTERN SUPERIORITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MBFR V 00452 270856Z

5. THE EASTERN PROPOSAL WOULD RESULT IN NATIONAL SUB-CEILINGS ON THE ARMED FORCES OF EACH PARTICIPANT. WE OPPOSE THIS.
6. EASTERN BEHAVIOR SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS SUGGESTS THAT THE EAST IS NOT INTERESTED IN SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS BUT RATHER IN PUTTING LIMITATIONS ON NATO FORCES.

7. WE HAVE SUGGESTED A NON-INCREASE COMMITMENT REGARDING ALL ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE AREA EXCEPT THE NAVY IN CONNECTION WITH AN AGREEMENT PROVIDING FOR SUBSTANTIAL US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS AND THE CONCEPT OF PARITY IN GROUND FORCES.

8. THE FORCE FREEZE SUGGESTED BY THE EAST WOULD PROVIDE THE EAST WITH A CONTRACTUAL POSSIBILITY OF INTERFERING WITH OUR FORCE ACTIVITIES WITHOUT ANY COMMENSURATE GAIN FOR MILITARY SECURITY.

9. MOREOVER, THE PROPOSAL IS NOT WORKABLE IN PRACTICAL TERMS BECAUSE THE EAST CONTINUES TO REFUSE TO SAY WHAT IS THE PRESENT LEVEL OF THEIR MANPOWER IN THE AREA.

POSSIBLE PRESS QUESTION:

WELL, HAS THERE BEEN AN INCREASE EITHER IN NATO OR IN WARSAW PACT FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA SINCE THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN?

SUGGESTED WESTERN REPLY:

1. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SLIGHT FLUCTUATIONS IN MANPOWER ON BOTH SIDES.

2. THE BIG PROBLEM IS THE VERY LARGE INCREASE OF SOVIET FORCES IN THE AREA WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS (SINCE 1968) AND WHICH HAS HAD THE EFFECT OF GREATLY INCREASING THE WARSAW PACT SUPERIORITY

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 MBFR V 00452 270856Z

IN GROUND FORCES.

3. THE LARGE DISPARITY IS THE REAL PROBLEM OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO TACKLE WITH OUR REDUCTION PROPOSALS.

4. THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM IS TO MOVE TOWARDS SERIOUS REDUCTIONS OF GROUND FORCES ON BOTH SIDES. END TEXT.RESOR

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